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ABSTRACT

A complete restructuring of American institutions, values, ideals, economy, politics, and culture is required to overcome the peripheralization and injustices caused by the racism that is endemic and embedded in the capitalist fabric of American society. Race relations have declined during the 1980s as evidenced by the erosion of many of the gains of the civil rights movement and a resurgence of overt racism. The white ruling class expresses occasional interest in and concern for minority groups through the formation of study commissions to minimize social, economic, and political costs and regain American hegemony in the world. The findings of the following studies indicate that despite the needs of growing minority populations, an insufficient number of minority group teachers are being prepared for roles in schools and institutions of higher learning: (1) "One Third of a Nation" (Commission on Minority Participation in Education and American Life, 1988); (2) the 1985 findings of the National Coalition of Advocates for Students; (3) "An Imperiled Generation" (Carnegie Foundation, 1988); (4) "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century" (Carnegie Foundation, 1986); (5) "Tomorrow's Teachers" (Holmes Group, 1986); and (6) "Teaching as a Profession: The Challenge for Oregon" (Oregon State Legislature, 1986). Furthermore, a study of the knowledge and attitudes of 202 undergraduate education majors at Lewis and Clark College conducted between 1983 and 1986 indicates that current teacher education is not preparing teachers who are sensitive to the cultural backgrounds and world views of black students. National commitment to multicultural education is only a first step to reforming national and global social and economic structures. A list of 25 references is appended. (FMW)

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"THE MELTING POT" REVISITED

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"THE MELTING POT" REVISITED*

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The New Racism

Race relations in the U.S. have clearly taken a turn for the worse in the 1980's. We are witnessing not only an erosion of the Civil Rights gains, but also, a systematic assault on busing, affirmative action, bilingual education, entitlement programs, and even multi-cultural/multi-ethnic education. Sixteen states have laws declaring English as the official language. There is also a clear resurgence of incipient and overt racism in society. There were at least one hundred cases of white threats and/or physical attacks on minorities in institutions of higher learning ranging from Stanford University to Dartmouth College (CBS Sixty Minutes, November 1988, Stanford Observer, December 1988) The U.S. Labor Department found Portland State University of racist discrimination(The Oregonian, Oct. 15, 1988). President Reagan refers to Nicaraguans as, "Those little Sandinistas." President-elect George Bush conducted a racist campaign by calling Reverend J. Jackson as "the hustler from Chicago," and making the Willie Horton (a black criminal) case a major campaign issue. Minority House leader B. Michael made numerous racist comments and sang racist songs on "the U.S.A. Today" national television program (The Guardian, December 7, 1988). There are still cases of mock slave auctions as school fund raising activities. Reagan's reconstituted Supreme Court dealt a serious blow to affirmative action on January 23, 1989.

Pronouncements by mainstream politicians, the media, and the civic leaders convey the sense that third world people, especially national liberationists, are either "communists" and/or terrorists, and thus a threat to America. When there is brief mention of violence in say the East Bank and Gaza, South Africa, or Portland, there is no clear indication of who the victims and/or the victimizers are. Even the so-called left and feminists in American society suffer from overt racism or racial isolation (Hooks, 1988). Vicious and murderous white attacks on minorities are on the increase, making normal life difficult for third world people. There were at least 33 racist incidents in Multnomah County in the last 12 months (Metropolitan Human Relations Commission), and 15 attacks between October 23 and December 24 (The Oregonian, December 24, 1988), yet there is no serious, organized, systematic high level move by the dominant group to counter these atrocities. In fact, heightened racism, xenophobia, jingoism, along with sexism and classism, have been sanctioned and fueled by white patriarchal elite in society.

Paper presented at the fifth annual conference of the Oregon Multicultural Education Association, February 16-17, 1989. Salem

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Commissions

Ever-mindful of cost-benefit analysis, the white ruling class expresses occasional concern for and interest in the peripheral population in society, if only to minimize the social, economic and political costs, and to regain U.S. imperial hegemony in the world. "Blue-ribbon" commissions are formed who rediscover a large third world in the midst of the richest country in the world, and sound the alarms of polarization, impending social upheaval, burdens on (white) society, `crime', the viability of `our democracy', competition, losing ground, national security, and `our standing in the world.' Thus, The Commission On Minority Participation in Education and American Life, which includes former presidents Carter and Ford, issued its report One-Third of a Nation in May, 1988. The Commission concludes that "America is moving backward - not forward - in its efforts to achieve the full participation of minority citizens in the life and prosperity of the nation." The report goes on to say that although progress has been made.

> But in education, employment, income, health, longevity, and other basic measures of individual and social well-being, gaps persist - and in some cases are widening - between members of minority groups and the majority population (CMPEA, p.1.).

And The Commission warns of the grave consequences of this development for the nation and urges the nation to redouble its efforts to expand the role and status of minorities and move beyond the current inertia. The Commission calls for a combined national plan to remove all obstacles, eliminate the gap between the majority and minority populations, and in twenty years, raise the minority quality of life equal to whites. The Commission further observes that evidence of faltering minority advancement can be found "in our schools, on our college campuses, on the street corners of our cities." Progress has been halted "and in many areas we have lost ground." The Commission raises serious concerns especially in light of the fact that by the turn of the century one-third of Americans will be minorities. The Commission hold all Americans as individuals and members of organizations, responsible for facing up to this task. It states that as a nation we must tackle these problems now and that no less a goal is acceptable.

Once more, we are confronted with some grim statistics. Today, 14% of all adults and 20% of children under 17 are minorities. By the year 2000, one-third of school age children will be minorities and by 2020, 39%. In 25 of the largest cities half or more than half of school children are minorities. At the same time 14% of U.S. population and half of minority children are officially poor. By the year 2000, about 42% of the school students will be minority or poor. And by the turn of the century, about 22 million of the 140.4 million people in the labor force will be non-white.

In 1986, 20.1% of whites over 25 had completed four years of college while 10.9% of blacks, 8.4% of Hispanics and 6% of Native Americans had done so. Figures on minority

income, poverty, life expectancy, child mortality, immunization and quality of life are equally grim. In 1985, 47% of black children, 41% of Hispanic children, and 18% of white children lived in poverty.

In 1985, 83% of white, 75% of black, 63% of Hispanics, and 55% of Native Americans graduated from high school. In the same year, blacks received 8% of the associate, 6% of the baccalaureate, and 4% of the graduate and 2.1 of the doctoral degrees. In 1986, only one black received a doctoral in computer science and six in mathematics (The Commission...).

Barriers to Excellence:

Another self-constituted commission called The National Coalition of Advocates for Students (1985) corroborates these findings and asserts that more than thirty years after the Brown decision, racial discrimination remains a serious barrier to quality education for black children. Sixty three percent of black students attend predominantly minority schools. Only about 8.5% of teachers are minorities, most of who teach minority students. Minority students fall behind grade-level as they progress in school. Minority students are punished more severely than white students. Drop-out rates for urban minority students can be as high as 80%. One-third do not graduate from high school. About 700,000 minorities drop-out of school every year. Black and other minority students are assigned disproportionately to special education and/or gifted classes. There are numerous instances of 90-100% upper level white and 90-100% minority classes. The Commission goes on to state that neither desegregation nor integration have guaranteed equal access to, or outcome from, education. The coalition charges that neglect and/or official policies have actually led to resegregation and a serious erosion of desegregation efforts. The poor quality of interaction between minority students and white educators constitutes a major contributary factor. In fact urban teachers have such low expectations for their minority students that they believe that the school cannot graduate more then 30% of the students. This prophecy becomes self-fulfilling in at least 50% of the cases. All judgement concerning behavior and performance is made by whites, according to white middle class norms (NCAS, 1985). Third world people talk in terms of push-outs rather than drop-outs.

Only about one-third of the three million limited English proficient students receive any special assistance. About 18% of eligible children benefit from Head Start. About 10% of Hispanic students are in bilingual education programs. Many textbooks either omit or present a distorted picture of third world people in the country. In 1981-82, about 25% of public school teachers had students with limited English proficiency in their classes, yet only 3.2% of the teachers had any training in this area (NCAS, 1985).

'An Imperiled Generation':

In late 1988 the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching issued a special report entitled An Imperiled Generation focusing on the plight of urban

schools. The report acknowledges the progress thus far, but warns that "There is, in short, a disturbing gap between reform rhetoric and results." The report observes that city schools have simply been written off and used only as warehouses to keep children off the streets. The authors of the report state that, "We find it disgraceful that in the most affluent country in the world so many of our children are so poorly served." It is said that the reform movement has largely bypassed our most deeply troubled schools. The report goes on to say that as far as urban education is concerned the glittering signs of urban renewal remains a facade.

The report warns of the dire consequences of the crisis in urban education. It talks about the existence of two separate societies, so different, that it would be difficult to unite the two. It states that the crisis must be seen for what it is: a major failure of social policy, a piecemeal approach to a problem that requires a unified response. The report recommends the following steps regarding urban education. First, we must affirm that every student can succeed, and we must behave and treat students accordingly. Second, we must implement an entirely new governance system in urban schools. Third, we must introduce renewal programs to every city school. Fourth, create a network of support beyond the school. The report recommends a National Urban Schools Program which will include a serious commitment and increased investment by the federal government. The report also recommends that we must spend more on: Head Start, child nutrition, chapter one, schools as community centers, teacher renewal, curriculum innovation, minority recruitment into teaching, and on bilingual education.

The report warns that not just a generation, but the entire nation is imperiled. And that real, not rhetorical, equality of educational opportunity, must be seen as an unfinished national agenda. And that when the nation is at risk, the nation must respond.

Teachers: Our One Best Hope:

Historically, when the country faces domestic or international crises, the elite focuses on education, viewing it as both a problem and a panacea at the same time. Education is viewed as a weapon in the war against communism, poverty, Toyota, AIDS, crime, traffic accidents, teen pregnancy, drugs, unemployment, threats to national security, and unruly labor. It is argued by the elite that these, and many other problems, are due to school failure. The educational system is urged and expected, though without the necessary commitment and resources, to solve our many crises. In this debate, attention is inevitably focused on school teachers. Thus we are issued two major national reports on teachers and teaching.

It is estimated that on the average, a child encounters 40 teachers from kindergarten through high school. These forty teachers are likely to have the greatest influence on the child outside her/his immediate family.

A Nation Prepared:

The Carnegie Foundation's Task Force on Teaching issued its much celebrated and influential report A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century in May 1986. The report states that school forms and influences children's opinions about society and their own future. The ethnicity and behavior of educators tell them something about power relations in society at large. School reality influences children's performance, behavior, self-image, attitudes toward self, others and society, as well as their future role as citizens. It is said that the teacher is a key to all this. Yet 8.5% of the teaching force and 30% students will be minority members by 1990. The challenge then is to attract more minorities into teaching at a time when there is increased demand for more teachers as well as higher standards for teachers. The Task Force estimates that we will need to produce about 200,000 teachers per year, of which 50,000 should be minority members. This at a time when minority enrollment in post secondary institutions is actually decreasing. The Task Force recommends that: we strengthen compensatory education programs for the at risk students; invest heavily in early childhood education; assist promising junior and high school minority students interested in teaching; establish partnerships among schools, colleges, the private sector, community and other organizations; channel more minorities in high school into college tracks, especially at a time of increased standards for college admission. The report adds that we must also implement and expand tutoring of high school students by both white and non-white college students.

The report issues several challenges to higher education. Colleges and universities must institute pre-freshmen summer programs for minorities, an early warning system of potential academic and social problems amongst minorities, a higher degree of faculty-student interaction, higher expectations for students, and renewed commitment to affirmative action. We must strengthen black and other minority colleges and universities. And we must improve transfers from community colleges to four year institutions. A very small portion (one in four) of these students transfer to four year institutions. And finally, the report urges that the federal government, foundations, academic institutions, and other private and public organizations invest heavily in financial aid for minority students who plan to teach. College costs are keeping minorities out and those who do obtain college degrees pursue more lucrative non-teaching careers. The task force suggests that we provide incentives to undergraduate and graduate minority students in order to induct them into teaching. In turn the students must commit themselves to a fixed period of teaching service.

The Holmes Group Report:

A self-formed group of some one hundred elite education schools and departments, calling itself the Holmes Group issued its report Tomorrow's Teachers in 1986. This group is concerned with the twin goals of reforming teacher education and the reform of the teaching profession. The group states it's goals as:

1. To make the education of teachers intellectually more solid;
2. To recognize differences in teachers' knowledge, skill, and commitment, in their education, certification, and work;
3. To create standards of entry to the profession-examinations and educational requirements-that are professionally relevant and intellectually defensible;
4. To connect our institutions to schools;
5. To make schools better places for teacher to work, and to learn.

The Holmes Group adds its voice to the chorus of the crisis in education and assigns itself a major responsibility as the leading organization engaged in study, research and teaching. However, the report makes scant mention of "at-risk students" in a generic sense. The report also states how some teachers misinterpret "the expressive behavior of minority students and students from non-English speaking homes." The report also mentions how affirmative action has created non-teaching options for minorities.

The group acknowledges, in one paragraph, its responsibility to help create a profession representative of the larger society. It considers minority representations as "a difficult problem." Member institutions commit themselves to increase minority enrollment in their teacher education programs. It is stated that this is to be achieved through increased recruitment at precollegiate level; endorsing loan-forgiveness programs to increase minority retention; and ensuring that professional evaluations are fair.

The Oregon Report:

So not to be left behind, and perhaps, because Vera Katz, speaker of the State House, was a member of the Carnegie task force on teaching, Oregon legislators commissioned their own report on teachers and teaching in the state. The report entitled Teaching as a Profession: The Challenge for Oregon issued in September 1986, constitutes a comprehensive study on the subject. The report states that 10% of Oregon's public school students are minorities and their number is rising. While minorities make up about 3% of the teachers, and their number may actually decrease. The report simply mentions the `diversity' in student body and states that

> cultural diversity is a critical ingredient in any school system that aspires to serve the needs of a wide range of students, and should be an important factor in recruiting talented men and women into the teaching profession (p. 27).

Teacher Test Conspiracy?!:

Paradoxically, while some are issuing urgent calls for increasing minority teachers in public schools, others seem to be subverting the call as well as existing recruitment patterns. According to one recent study (Education Week, November 23, 1988) nationwide, about 38,000 minority candidates have been excluded from teaching in the last five

years, because of their failure to pass state-mandated competency tests. The study states that 12/5% of American teachers are from minority groups, while 27% of the students are minorities. The minority teaching force would seem to be under assault due to poor preparation, non-teaching options, institutional racism, and biased tests. The study projects that if current trends continue fewer than 5% of the nation's teachers will be minorities by 2000. The author recommends dropping current tests in favor of fairer and more accurate measures of applied knowledge and skills in the classroom. According to this report 46 states required some form of competency testing for admission to teacher education programs and/or teacher licensing. Passing rate for first time taker is 71-96% for whites, 15-50% for blacks, 39-65% for Hispanics, 37-77% for Asian Americans and 20-70% for Native Americans. Such testing and high level of minority failure have had a devastating effect on teacher education programs in black institutions and private liberal arts colleges. The study notes an absence of any policies to counter the deleterious effects of such testing, or to increase the number of minorities in teaching. According to one study, 41% of minority teachers said they plan to leave teaching in five years (Education Week, October 5, 1988).

Few Role Models:

Other statistics also indicate that fewer minorities are preparing for teaching. In black institutions of higher learning, which have produced more than half the black teachers, only 8.7% of the freshmen in 1986 intended to become teachers. This means that in the future both minority and majority students will encounter fewer minority teachers. This has serious implications for minority participation in the professions, socioeconomic, artistic, civic, and political organizations, income distribution, and for the U.S. role/status in the emerging global reality. It means fewer role models for minority children. Further, it has implications for social security, domestic peace and harmony, and even national security. In the words of one Commission, "left uncorrected, the current trend signals continuing social tension, and is an omen of future national decline."

The Challenge to Higher Education:

The various reports challenge America's institutions of higher learning to renew and strengthen their efforts to increase minority recruitment, retention, and graduation. This implies that academic institutions must recruit minorities more aggressively at all levels of higher education. Academic institutions must also create academic and social environments which welcome, support and retain minorities. Institutions must also create campus atmospheres which tolerate, celebrate and value ethno-racial, cultural, and intellectual diversity. Institutions must make special effort to recruit not only minority students, but also minority faculty and staff. And academic institutions must work closely with primary and secondary schools to prepare more minorities for pursuing higher education. The Commission on Minorities indicates that higher education can and must play an important role since:

it serves as the gateway to the professions; it is the laboratory for the generation of solutions to difficult social problems; and since it historically has served as the nation's conscience. We must remember that our educational system is interactive and interconnected. But we have not developed the orientation or structures required to increase coordination and cooperation in the system, from preschool to graduate school. We cannot increase minority participation in higher education without improving things at the lower levels of schooling. Yet the educational system is riddled with fragmentation, specialization, rationalization, elitism, segregation, ethnocentrism, and competition. All educational leaders must recognize their interdependence and must develop the infra-structure which fosters cooperation, commitment and mutual respect.

Focus on Portland:

Most of Portland's 8,000 black students, are concentrated in eight elementary, two middle, and three high schools located in the North and Northeast Portland area. This enrollment pattern has remained steady since 1980 when the district, in response to black protest, abandoned a largely one way busing program. All children have a right to attend neighborhood schools and the district claims a policy of quality education for all. And the schools seem to do alright with middle class blacks. But for the largely lower class black children the schools continue to be ineffective.

There continues to be a gap between the achievement scores of black and white students. Thirteen percent of black students were in special classes, compared to 9.3% whites and nearly 50% of black students were in classes for the learning disabled. 26.9% of all black students were in remedial reading, and 22.5% in remedial math programs. In contrast, only 8.2% of whites were in remedial reading and 5.4% in remedial math programs. Black students were half as likely to be enrolled in the talented and gifted programs. Only 3.2% of blacks compared to 6.8% of whites took part in TAG last year. Only 62.4% of blacks who began their freshman year in 1984 graduated from high school in June 1988, compared to 68.2% of all students. Twelve percent of black male students compared to 4.7% of white male students were suspended from school. Seventy three black seniors failed the eighth grade high school graduation test, up from 11 in 1987 (The Oregonian, December 20, 1988).

The underlying issue for the blacks in Portland is the continuing wide disparity between black and white students. Although blacks are gaining academically faster than other groups, they continued to lag well behind all other groups in the 1987 tests. And at the high school level blacks scored an average of C minus, a half a grade below the average GPA of whites. Employees and state officials say that many of the high school graduates are barely literate, let alone having the ability to read, write or think well, or speak a foreign language. And black high school graduates are not well-prepared for college either. Although 218 blacks took the SAT in 1988, compared to 191 in 1987, their scores declined and ranked way behind whites.

And more of these black students are turning away from Oregon institutions of higher learning and attending all-black institutions in the Eastern part of the country. In the fall of 1987 only 205 blacks enrolled in Oregon colleges and universities, 52 of who were offered free tuition. Black students choose not to deal with isolation and academic/institutional racism in Oregon (The Oregonian, December 20, 1988).

Worlds Apart:

This portion of the paper deals with the profile of mostly undergraduate students seeking basic teaching certificate at Lewis & Clark College. The study was conducted between Fall, 1983 and Spring, 1986 including a total of 202 students.

Profile: Thirty-eight percent of the 202 respondents were male, sixty two percent were female. The average age was 27-37 and the range was 19-47; 64% of the respondents were between 19-22 years of age, the usual age for undergraduate students. Twenty-two percent of the respondents said they majored in elementary education, 44% were studying toward certification for secondary school teaching, while 34% said they were undecided about going into teaching. At the time of answering the questionnaire 1.5% of the students were freshmen, 16% sophomores, 26.7% juniors, 26.7% seniors, and 29% were fifth year students. Only 2 of the 202 respondents were minorities.

Parental education: As far as parental educational attainment goes, 24.7% of the respondents' fathers were high school graduates, 28.7% college graduates, 38.8% had done graduate work, and 1% had elementary or trade school education. As for mothers' educational attainment, 24.8% were high school graduates, 43.9% college graduates, 28% had done graduate work, and the remainder had elementary or trade education only.

Parental Occupation: The respondents listed their fathers' occupations as follows: construction (3), boat captain (1), welder (1), business administration (17) small businessman (16), brick mason (1), executive (5), physician (25), college professor (12), developer (1), salesman (8), banker (4), attorney (5), statistician (2), mechanic (3), teacher (4), artist (1), mail carrier (2), police officer (3), engineer (6), realtor (2), milk man (1), minister (3), economist (1), military (2), educational administrator (3), machinist (2), photographer (1), logger (2), truck driver (4), mill worker (2), writer (1), journalist (1), factory worker (1), "none" (5), retired (27), deceased (1), "no answer" (5). The largest clusters of fathers' occupations are therefore doctors (12.8%), business administrators (8.7%) and college professor (6%). It is noteworthy that only four fathers are school teachers. Many (10.7%) fathers were retired.

The 191 students who answered the question on mothers' occupations listed the following: nurse (13), artist (4), realtor (5), professor (5), small businesswoman (5), housewife (39), teacher (19), secretary (28), doctor (2),

management (7), saleswoman (3), educational administration (4), insurance estimator (1), beautician (1), travel agent (1), librarian (1), journalist-writer (1), executive (1), social worker (3), teacher/educational aide (3), musician (3), student (1), computer programmer (2), grocery clerk (1), dental hygienist (1), CPA (1), radio announcer (1), retired (15), deceased (3), unemployed (3), "none" (3), "wife" (1), "at home" (1), and "housekeeper" (1). Eleven student did not answer this question. It is important to note that 37.1% of the respondents' mothers were not working outside their homes. And that 14.6% of the mothers were secretaries.

Family SES: The students were asked to rank their family socioeconomic status into low (less than $21,000) middle ($21,000-$45,000), and upper ($45,000+) class. Twelve percent ranked their families as "low", 58.5% as middle, and 28% as upper class. The remainder did not answer this question.

On teaching: As to their intentions about teaching, 70.7% of the respondents said they planned to teach; 5.5% said they do not intend to teach; while 24% were undecided.

The students were then asked to give their primary reason/motive for choosing teaching as a career. Their answers were: 43.5% intellectual; 43% psychological; 11.5% political; and 1.5% practical.

What they can offer: In answer to the question "what is the best thing you feel you can offer your students?" the respondents mentioned the following: love of learning (65), knowledge of subject matter (40), critical/political thinking (30), love of people/children (13), experience (12), understanding (11), creativity (11), communication skills (8), individual perspective (8), caring (7), myself (7), stability (6), sensitivity (5), role model (4), skills (4), opportunity (3), fun (3), positive environment (3), problem solving (3), practicability (2), morality (2), dialogue (1), wonder (1), competence (1), warmth (1), sense of humor (1), discipline (1), career development (1), courage (1), and nothing (1). Fourteen people did not answer this question.

Preferred Pupils: When asked what type of students they would be most effective with, 20% said urban, 45% said suburban, 17% said rural, 6% said "all", 4% said that it did not matter, 6% said urban-rural, 11% did not answer the question.

General Knowledge: Geography: Below are some general knowledge questions and the percentages of correct and/or incorrect answers by the respondents.

Question	Correct Answers	Incorrect Answers
The countries in Central America	14%	86%

Israel's borders	6%	94%
The capitol of South Africa	6%	94%
The capitol of North Korea	3%	97%
The population of Cuba	3%	97%
The capitol of the State of Delaware	18%	82%
The % of minority population in the U.S.	4%	96%
The % of illiterate adults in the United States	13%	87%
The % of officially poor in the United States	8%	92%

Included in the wrong answers to the question on the capital of South Africa were Kenya, Zimbabwi, Lagos, Zaire, Mozambique, Rhodesia, and Peoria. One student thought that 200 million people lived in Cuba "just like Los Angeles."

People: One question dealt with name recognition to see if the students recognize the significance, role, and contribution of a few individuals. Following are the names and percentage of correct and incorrect responses.

Name	Correct Responses	Incorrect Responses
Archibald Cox	19%	81%
Ho Chi Minh	22%	78%
Fredrick Douglass	22%	78%
Barbara McClintock	3%	97%
Mother Jones	7%	93%
Maurice Bishop	4%	96%

Here are a few of the more interesting responses to this question. One respondent said that A. Cox was the mayor of New York City. Of Ho Chi Minh, one student identified him as "the leader of Vietcong", another as "a Chinese leader with influential wife", and another as "Chinese leader after Moose Tung". F. Douglass was identified as "U.S. president", "a prominent Senator", "a war general", "a Supreme Court Judge", "someone who ran against Lincoln for president", and as someone "involved somehow." Mother Jones was referred to as a "Catholic nun", "a radical hippie", someone who "works in El Salvador", and as someone "whose sister works with starving children in India." As for Maurice Bishop, one student thought he was

"a black basketball player" and another identified him as "leader of Black Muslims."

Foreign Language: The students were asked to rate their proficiency in a foreign language on a scale of one (low) to five (high) and the distribution reads as follows: 25.6%:1; 19%:2; 24%:3; 10%:4; 10%:5; and 11%: not applicable.

Cultural Cold War:

It is obvious that there is an enormous gap between the typical educator and the typical minority student. Under these circumstances, the school as a crucial interface institution, becomes an arena for ethnoracial and cultural estrangement, ignorance, stereotypes, misunderstanding, hostility and open warfare (Willis, 1977). Yet, there is compelling evidence that when the school (white) and community (minority) worlds are bridged, positive things can/do happen. James P. Comer (1988) discusses the "strengths and strategies" by which many minorities overcome disadvantages in society. He points out that American education is designed to serve the standard mainstream population and that teachers are not trained to work with disadvantaged students. White middle class educators have many misconceptions and stereotypes (Hale-Benson, 1987) about and low expectations for minority students (Rist, 1978). These educators are quick to label and punish otherwise perfectly normal and effective minority behavior which deviates from institutional norms. Instead of bridging the developmental and ethnocultural gaps, the educators judge, label and penalize the victim. Teachers want to be successful professionals and they view their disadvantaged charges as an obstacle to such success.

It is exceedingly difficult to establish desirable emotional and intellectual bonds under such adverse conditions. This in turn makes it difficult for minority students to develop and maintain any affinity with the school and what it represents. Students feel rejected by the school and they respond with rejection, resistance, outright hostility, poor performance, or even withdrawing altogether. Parents of these underdeveloped children who have great hopes for the school and high aspirations for their children soon learn about student-teacher tension and become party to the polarization. And since educators are rarely part of the school community and since there are indeed educational, racial and class disparities between mainstream educators and minorities, such polarization is even greater (Education Week, November 30, 1988).

Comer observes that one reason why most educators are poorly prepared for work with minorities is that most education reform in the 1940's and 1950's focused on academic standards and content rather than on child development and educator-community relationship. Current reform efforts are placing a high premium on "excellence," meritocracy, economism, and international competition.

When we ask educators what the problems are they talk about discipline, lack of student motivation and respect, and lack of parental/community involvement and support.

When we ask high school students and those who drop out, they say that "teachers don't care." Both of these perceptions center on relationship issues. White Middle class educators need to acquire a repertoire of social skills necessary for working with minorities. They must undergo training and experience in multicultural settings. They must reflect on how they are raced and classed and what ethnocentrism means (Weiler, 1988, Apple, 1987). There is need for sympathy, empathy, trust, faith, and respect on the part of educators. They need a different set of social skills so they can cultivate desirable skills in minority students (Comer, 1988).

Toward Multicultural Education

If we want to arrest the incipient cold race war and prevent a serious explosion, we must make the educational system in its entirety represent our diverse and pluralistic society and the world. At this point, 26 states indicate they have some kind of multicultural education; twenty eight states have a person responsible for such a purpose; only nine states require training in multicultural education for teacher certification; 32 states screen school texts for racism (and sexism); and 31 states indicate that they screen the curriculum for racism (and sexism). Serious national commitment to multicultural education will help. But the crisis in race relations is endemic to the very fabric of society and therefore, requires major social surgery.

Beyond Multicultural Education:

The Commission on Minority Participation in Education and American life appears to grasp the seriousness of America's race problem. It therefore addresses itself to the two-third of the nation that is whites, that "generosity, compassion, and a strong sense of social justice...are essential qualities in the struggle to create a better society." The Commission also appeals to the enlightened self-interest of the dominant group by asserting that full participation of minorities is vital to our survival as a free and prosperous nation." Inevitably, our fate will be shared." Our goal must be to make minorities more visible physically and less visible statistically.

Structural Reforms:

The Commission, like other concerned and thoughtful Americans, challenges the nation to the following policy objectives. 1) Colleges and universities must renew and strengthen their efforts to increase minority recruitment, retention, and graduation; 2) National leaders must stimulate economic growth and restore national solvency; 3) Elected officials must lead efforts to assure minority advancement; 4) Voluntary and private organizations must initiate or expand programs designed to increase minority participation and achievement; 5) All sectors of society must renew their commitment to affirmative action; 6) Minority public officials, institutions, and voluntary agencies must expand their leadership role; and 7) educational leaders must improve coordination and cooperation among all levels and systems.

Injustice, inequities, neglect, abuse, exploitation, misery, degradation, exclusion, and dehumanization in the U.S. empire are not simple accidents or mistakes. They are not just matters of individual pathology, or of institutional malfunctioning, attitudes or ignorance. Although these play a part. On the contrary, capitalism as a total system supported by its ideological, institutional, academic, psychological and other superstructural components creates, maintains, and requires peripheralization, racism, and injustice. Racism is endemic to and embedded in the very fabric of society. The ultimate sure solution will require a thorough restructuring of the institutions, values, ideals, economy, politics, and culture in this society and throughout the globe.

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